

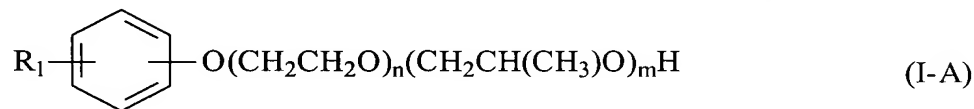
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

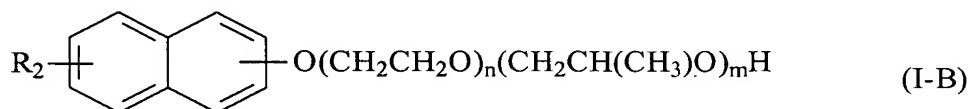
LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. - 15. (Canceled)

16. (New) A developing solution comprising an alkali aqueous solution containing 2 to 10 wt% of at least one of a nonionic aromatic ether-based activator represented by the following formula (I-A) and a nonionic aromatic ether-based activator represented by the following formula (I-B):



wherein R_1 represents H or an alkyl group having from 1 to 100 carbon atoms, and n represents an integer of from 0 to 100 and m represents an integer of from 0 to 100 and the sum of $n+m$ is at least 3,



wherein R_2 represents H or an alkyl group having from 1 to 100 carbon atoms, and n and m each represents an integer of from 0 to 100.

17. (New) The developing solution as claimed in claim 16, wherein the developing solution contains an inorganic alkali agent.

18. (New) The developing solution as claimed in claim 16, wherein the developing solution has a pH of 13.0 or less.

19. (New) The developing solution as claimed in claim 16, wherein the developing solution contains a carbonic acid or a carbonate.

20. (New) The developing solution as claimed in claim 16, wherein the developing solution contains a chelating agent containing a divalent metal.

21. (New) The developing solution as claimed in claim 16, wherein the developing solution has an electrical conductance of from 3 to 30 S/cm.

22. (New) The developing solution as claimed in claim 16, wherein the alkali aqueous solution contains 2 to 10 wt% of the nonionic aromatic ether-based activator represented by formula (I-B).

23. (New) The developing solution as claimed in claim 16, wherein the developing solution contains a silicate.